

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
September 30, 2013

The Honorable Council of the City of Evansville met in Special session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, September 30, 2013 in the City Council Chambers, Room 301 Civic Center Complex, Evansville, Indiana, with President Connie Robinson presiding. The following business was conducted.

These minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript. Audiotapes of this meeting are on file in the City Clerk's Office.

ROLL CALL:

Present: McGinn, Mosby, Brinkerhoff-Riley, Friend, Lindsey, Adams, O'Daniel, Weaver, Robinson

There being nine (9) members present and zero (0) members absent and nine (9) members representing a quorum, I hereby declare this session of the Common Council officially open.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

This evening the pledge of allegiance is led by Robert Allen

Fellow Councilmen and those in the audience, welcome to the September 30, 2013 meeting of the Common Council.

COUNCIL ATTORNEY

This evening Scott Danks is City Council Attorney.

SERGEANT AT ARMS

This evening Officer Campbell is Sergeant at Arms.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

EMAILED MATERIAL:

*A Resolution from the Vanderburgh County Commissioners pledging funds in support of the proposed Downtown Convention Hotel Project

ON YOUR DESK THIS EVENING:

*City Council Meeting Agenda for September 30, 2013

President Robinson: Can I have a motion to receive, file and make these reports and communications a part of the minutes of the meeting?

Councilwoman Mosby moved and Councilman Friend seconded the motion to receive, file and make these reports and communications a part of the minutes of the meeting. Voice vote. So ordered.

CONSENT AGENDA

SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE G-2013-14 AMENDED

FINANCE

FRIEND

An Ordinance of the Evansville Common Council authorizing the City of Evansville, Indiana, to issue one or more series of its "Economic Development Revenue Bonds, Series 2013 (Downtown Convention Hotel Project)" in an agreement principal amount not to exceed \$20,000,000, and approving and authorizing other actions in respect thereto

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

CHAIRMAN FRIEND

Chairman Friend: Yes Madam President, your Finance Committee met this evening to hear Ordinance G-2013-14 as amended and it comes forward with, I'm happy to say, a do-pass recommendation.

President Robinson: It's been a long time coming.

Chairman Friend: It's been a long time.

President Robinson: Can I have a motion to adopt the Committee Reports and move Ordinance G-2013-14 as amended to Third Reading

Councilman O'Daniel moved and Councilwoman Mosby seconded the motion to move this Ordinance to Third and Final Reading. Voice vote. So ordered.

REGULAR AGENDA

THIRD READING OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE G-2013-14 AMENDED

FINANCE

FRIEND

An Ordinance of the Evansville Common Council authorizing the City of Evansville, Indiana, to issue one or more series of its "Economic Development Revenue Bonds, Series 2013 (Downtown Convention Hotel Project)" in an agreement principal amount not to exceed \$20,000,000, and approving and authorizing other actions in respect thereto

President Robinson: Is there a motion to adopt Ordinance G-2013-14 as amended?

Councilman Friend moved and Councilman Weaver seconded the motion to adopt Ordinance G-2013-14 as amended and call the roll.

Comments made by Councilmembers before casting their respective votes:

Councilman McGinn: First of all I'd like to say the things I'm gonna say this evening are completely different than what I had planned on saying last Monday. I would like to let everyone know I appreciate what everyone did to help us arrive at this point. Publically I want to give a special thanks to this Council for without regard to republican or democrat after your name, sharing information, confidences, your cares and concerns about this to get us to this

point. I appreciate that and the City should know the spirit of cooperation that has existed for the past several months so I happily vote aye for this.

Councilman Mosby: It's not been any secret where I stand on this project. I think it's a wonderful thing for Evansville. I'm ready to move the City forward. I appreciate everyone's comments, emails, text messages and I say let's start digging. Aye.

Councilwoman Brinkerhoff-Riley: I'll be extremely brief. It's really...it's not just that it's a magnificent deal for the taxpayers. I mean it truly is and I'm so appreciative of all the people that came together in the end out of just a sheer devotion to the City, to not just put this at the, you know, the debt load that it needed to be at from the very beginning, but to just establish a model. I mean we haven't just approved a convention hotel at one of the lowest subsidies that the public has put out in a very long time but we've created a model agreement that the rest of the country will look at when they do these projects now that everyone has skin in the game, not just the public but the private businesses as well as the developer. So I mean it's really important what we've done and that's really all that the world, whoever's actually looking, is going to remember and I really appreciate it. Thank you very much and welcome to Evansville. I vote yes.

Councilman Friend: Ah yes, again I would like to thank the Council as a whole, how we worked on this, and especially to the Administration. You know this is a good example of how government should really work. I mean I think what we accomplished between the Administration and this Council...if Congress could just adopt such a movement, (*Laughter*) we would be much, much further ahead, and I'm excited about moving Evansville forward. I know it's been a laborious, long suffering thing we've gone through, but at the end we're gonna be very proud of what the...that's going to be delivered to the citizens of Evansville. With that, again I thank everyone that was all involved, top to bottom, and with that I vote aye.

Councilman Lindsey: Ah yes, I think this is a win-win for everyone and I'm pleased with the outcome and I think everybody in this room's happy. It wasn't that way a week ago and with that being said I vote yes also.

Councilman Adams: Having attended medical meetings and conventions about more than three times a year for thirty years, I think I'm as aware as anybody in this room how valuable a convention hotel is. They just don't happen without a hotel. This has been an incredible process. Collaboration to me is the continuing meeting even though you violently, or even mildly, disagree and keep on communicating, making sure it doesn't turn into a personality thing; sticking to the issue. And this is what happened here. This is not a one-week thing. We've been talking about this for four or five months and I'm really very, very proud of the Administration and my colleagues for the hard work they've done. The subsidy has gone from 46% to 44%, now to 17%. That is fantastic. I vote aye.

Councilman O'Daniel: I probably won't be as brief as others. This is actually a very important night. I'm glad that everybody is (*Inaudible*); shows the interest to be here. Obviously we've received hundreds of emails, you know, hundreds of letters of support both for and against and

it's very important to have the community express their concerns; express their support, because that helps us make a wise decision.

To dispel any myth, I've always been for a hotel in that particular location, but like anything, you may want something, you may need something, but all projects come at various costs and that's something that we had to determine, whether or not it was within our ability to bear that cost, especially in light of other projects, other visions, that people share. And in the end, we reached a compromise, one that doesn't inhibit our ability to pursue the vision of downtown. That's one that I'm sure the Mayor shares and the Council shares as well. In reaching that compromise, and that's a term that, at least in the press, is often disparaged, it's also the way that things get done. It doesn't lead to gridlock. It keeps the lines of communication open and to that end the Mayor and the Administration and all the Councilmembers were...it's what made this work. HCW, they compromised. They gave ownership to a private partner. That's something that we didn't have on the table when it was 37½ million dollars of public money.

The business community invested in Evansville. The Administration heard the concerns of the Council on certainly ancillary projects such as retail and agreed to remove that. And in turn, the Council never foreclosed the opportunity of listening and reevaluating the cost of the project, and in the end, the taxpayers are going to be left with 18 million dollars less in burden; we're going to have a hotel that was promised, apartments that were promised, and we're gonna take a vacant lot and make it brand-new again.

All of that is very, very exciting. You know I grew up in this town. I came back to be a lawyer. I love this town and I want to see...I want to see downtown pride because I don't think a city necessarily thrives unless you can fill the donut hole and for years downtown has been a donut hole. We need a vibrant downtown. And those who...there have been some naysayers out there that somehow we don't have a vision for this downtown. I can assure you nothing is further from the truth. That vision includes a medical center downtown, a medical school; one in which a thousand people will come down here daily, that will fill four city blocks, that will have new restaurants and bars crop up around it, which will have housing, perhaps take some old vacant warehouses and convert them into downtown lofts. On the other side of downtown perhaps create some brownstones for some of those new medical students and the professors and the doctors that come in an adjunct basis, or maybe even permanently. Grocery stores will come in. Retail will come in.

That's the vision for downtown that have. It's the downtown that I want. It's the downtown that I wasn't willing to sacrifice if we had to invest too much of our money. I think we've reached that. Twenty million dollars, we'll see a return on our investment. We'll get that back in tax money. We'll get it back in hotel taxes, in business development, and convention dollars as well. It's a win-win for everybody.

With that, I vote yes.

Councilman Weaver: Hell yeah!

(Laughter & Applause)

President Robinson: I believe that tonight we have served this community well. We provided the support that we needed. I want to thank all my colleagues. I know we got tired of each other but we all worked together. I want to thank the Mayor. He never did get belligerent. He might have been frustrated but he didn't let it show much and he was always there when we called him and told him we had other recommendations.

But I guess of all the telephone calls that I got, when a CEO of Old National Bank calls you and tells you that they're gonna contribute this type of money, you know it has to be a win-win situation and I want to thank Bob Jones. To put it like...instead of saying hell I'll say and his boys for coming forward; we really appreciate it.

I want to thank HCW. I know it's been rough. I know you probably got frustrated with us and you probably did say, "Hey, I'm outta here!", but it will be worth your while and we thank you for coming here.

And with that, I say aye.

(Applause)

ROLL CALL

Ayes: McGinn, Mosby, Brinkerhoff-Riley, Friend, Lindsey, Adams, O'Daniel, Weaver, Robinson

President Robinson: I guess at one time they thought I'd be the deciding vote. Now my vote is just symbolic I guess.

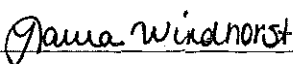
There being nine (9) Ayes and zero (0) Nays, Ordinance G-2013-14 as amended is hereby declared adopted. Thank you.

(Cheers and Applause)

Can we have a motion for adjournment?

Councilman O'Daniel moved and Councilman Friend seconded the motion to adjourn. Voice Vote. So Ordered.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.



Laura Windhorst, City Clerk



Constance Robinson, President